



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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M/021/004

In Reply Refer To:
UT-042
3809: UTU-67116

January 8, 2007

Ms. Susan M. White
Minerals Program Coordinator
Division of Oil, Gas and Minerals
1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210
Salt Lake City, UT 84720

Dear Ms. White:

This letter responds to Division letter to Hecla Mining Company, dated December 28, 2006, authorizing partial release of the reclamation surety for Hecla's Escalante Silver Mine, located in Iron County, Utah. The permit area for the Escalante Silver Mine encompasses private land and BLM-managed land administered by the BLM Cedar City Field Office. The mine was permitted as a large mine under DOGM rules, file number M/021/054, and as a plan of operations under BLM regulations, file number UTU-67116.

As you may be aware, BLM's principal remaining concern for the BLM lands impacted by this project is the successful eradication of all knapweed, a noxious invasive weed, that has become established on portions of the tailings impoundment area. Until eradication can be accomplished through ongoing operator efforts or until a trust fund is established between the company and BLM to allow BLM to carry out the eradication, BLM will continue to request that adequate bond monies be retained to fund this eradication effort.

As the bond monies proposed for release are connected entirely with disturbances or liabilities located on privately-held lands, we consent to their release. We consider the remaining bond amount, \$42,756.00, adequate to secure the remaining site reclamation liabilities, some of which are located on BLM-managed land, including the knapweed eradication.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ed Ginouves of my staff at 435-865-3040.

Sincerely,

Todd S. Christensen
Field Office Manager

cc: Mr. Paul Glader, Manager Environmental Services, Hecla Mining Company